



Feds: North Carolina Crime Lab Buried Blood Evidence

FBI Report Says Crime Lab Misrepresented Crucial Blood Evidence in Hundreds of Cases

By JESSICA HOPPER

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[Greg Taylor](#) was wrongfully convicted of killing a prostitute in 1991 in [North Carolina](#). Taylor proclaimed his innocence, but the evidence against him seemed insurmountable: blood from the victim found on his SUV.

The catch is that there was never any blood in the car. Taylor was convicted after [crime lab](#) technicians reported traces of blood on his SUV near the crime scene. Those same technicians buried the results of additional testing that showed there was never any blood.

Taylor wrongly served 17 years in prison until being released in February.

Blood Evidence Buried in Hundreds of Cases

Taylor might not be alone. A new report released by the [FBI](#) showed that North Carolina crime lab workers omitted, overstated or falsely reported blood evidence over a 16-year period.

"The practice is unacceptable," said Chris Wrecker, one of the report's investigators. "We were encouraged to turn over every rock and look at everything."

North Carolina Attorney General [Roy Cooper](#) ordered the review in March after a hearing about Taylor's case. During the hearing, a North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation agent testified that the crime lab once had a policy of excluding complete blood test results from reports sent to defense attorneys.

Cooper said that the investigators pored through 15,000 lab files from the period between 1986 and 2003. Of those, they identified 230 instances where a lab report did not clearly reflect the totality of information in the lab notes.

"I firmly believe in the interest of justice that the full case files in each of these cases should be reviewed by both prosecutors and appropriate defense counsel to determine if any of these cases should be re-opened," Cooper said.

Death of Michael Jordan's Father Among Cases

The investigation does not conclude that people were wrongfully convicted of crimes, but it does call for a re-examination of 190 of the 230 criminal cases where blood evidence was misrepresented.

The independent report confirmed long-held suspicions about the people at the North Carolina crime lab. It said that "information that was material or even favorable to the defense was withheld and misrepresented."

Of the 190 cases that will now be reviewed, four people are sitting on death row, three have already been executed and five died in prison.

One of the highest-profile cases involved in the investigation is the conviction of two men for the murder of the father of basketball superstar [Michael Jordan](#). Lab technicians reported that there was blood at the crime scene but they didn't reveal that four additional tests were inconclusive.

Four of the technicians responsible still work for the lab and that state is promising that they will be disciplined. Since 2003, North Carolina's crime lab has changed its methods substantially. It uses modern blood testing methods and prosecutors have online access to lab files that they can give to defense attorneys, too.

Still, for Taylor, the report is too little, too late.

"What is it worth to miss your daughters 10th birthday, to miss her high school graduation, to miss her college graduation ... to hear about her walking down the aisle on her wedding day by herself?" Taylor asked ABC News affiliate WTVD in May after being pardoned.

He vows to work to make sure no one is ever wrongfully convicted again.

The state has had to pay Taylor for his lost time, and it's now entirely possible that they could be forced to do the same for many others.

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